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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNSC](#) [BM](#) [RS](#)  
SUBJECT: DEMARCHING RUSSIA ON A BURMA RESOLUTION

REF: STATE 88973

Classified By: Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs Kirk Augustine.  
Reasons: 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Poloff made reftel demarche June 5 to Petr Ilichev, UN Political Affairs Senior Counselor, MFA International Organizations Department. Ilichev said that Burma did not represent a threat to international peace and security, or to security in the region, and thus was not an appropriate subject for a UN Security Council resolution. He thought that any UNSC action on Burma at all would be problematic, because the General Assembly would likely consider it to be outside the UNSC's mandate. Ilichev said Moscow had not decided yet whether it would block a UNSCR on Burma.

¶2. (C) Ilichev argued for constructive engagement with the Burmese regime, saying attempts to pressure or isolate it were counterproductive. He pointed to U/SYG Gambari's visit as evidence that the Burmese leadership would not shun engagement. Ilichev acknowledged concerns with the decision to extend the term of Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest, but called it an internal matter and implied that the regime had legitimate interest in keeping her from "incitement," noting her activities during her last period of freedom in 2002. He was encouraged that Gambari had been allowed to visit with her.

¶3. (C) Ilichev also argued with several more of our points, noting that the Burmese had promised Gambari that problems with UN agency access would be addressed, that Burma had a national program for dealing with infectious diseases, and that Moscow's information indicated the number of Burmese refugees in Bangladesh had dropped from 250,000 to 20,000, with many returning home from Thailand as well.  
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